

Between Adaptation and Appropriation: Re- Reading Albert Camus' Absurdism in Sonny Sampson-Akpan's *Found and Lost*

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Abstract

Adaptation and appropriation are important creative techniques utilized by modern African dramatists in their creative enterprises. Adaptation may simply be defined as the transformation of a work of art into another form, medium or translocation to another space. Appropriation in the other hand is making personal or the replication of what exists in another environment to a new location. The two techniques have served modern African dramatists in different capacities during and through the evolutionary process of modern African drama. Similarly, the two literary techniques raise questions of originality and imitation on the authenticity of modern African drama; because of the tug of war-like relationship between the world of the original and the world of the derivation. This paper focuses on evaluation of Sonny Samson -Akpan's *Found and Lost*, to ascertain if Akpan's play is an adaptation of Albert Camus' *Cross Purpose* or an appropriation of his absurdist philosophy. The aim is to assess Akpan's ingenuity in creative adaptation and what it can contribute to the revival of the declining absurd theatre in Africa. Case study, content and comparative analyses approaches of the qualitative research method are adopted by the researchers to achieve research objectives.

Introduction

The evolution and developmental trend of modern African theatre encountered initial criticisms especially from Western scholars and Eurocentric Africans who insisted that drama and theatre is alien to Africans. They argued that fundamental to any society is the presence of substantive literatures which are informed by the society's genealogy.

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The lack of these therefore, made evolutionary critics of African theatre conclude that Africa is a continent without the experience of dramatic literature in the Western sense of it. These criticisms lingered through different developmental phases of modern African theatre up till the period when the response of Modern African Dramatists to these scholarly issues resulted to the writing of literary plays with indigenous themes. The journey to this point saw African dramatists employing different dramatic and theatrical techniques including adaptation and appropriation of foreign theoretical and dramatic models.

Consequently, the tone of theory and criticism of modern African theatre changed; the subject bifurcated into what could be termed authentic African drama and theatre and what constitute modern African drama? Evidently culture, historical and societal events as well as contact with others condition the drama and theatre of a people. Hence, to a large extent, the earliest efforts to evolve written drama in Africa reflected these underlining elements that inform the literature of a people. This trend made the likes of Ngugi wa Thiong'o resolve to write in indigenous African languages, while others like Wole Soyinka, Ola Rotimi, Kalu Uka J.P. Clark Bekederemo and Shegae Gabre Medhin who used foreign languages achieved the Africanist quest for a personality theatre through exploration of indigenous themes. However, modern African Dramatists in their quest for recognition and global identity; went beyond this personality theatre beginning and started imitation of Western plays through adaptation and appropriation that reflect the impact of the West on Africa. According to Canice Chukwuma Nwosu:

... the uniqueness of African theatre, stems from the colonial encounter and other African experiential issues. However, historical and politico-economic factors also affect the nature, theory and practice of African theatre. Africa's pre-colonial history, the subsequent colonial experience and the complexities of her post-colonial realities exert enormous influence on her theatre. (18)

Flirtation with diverse dramatic techniques ranging from: syncretization, approximation, adaptation and appropriation that eventually ended up in the popular syncretic dramaturgy that dominate modern African theatre are sometimes treated with obvious skepticism that breeds binary complexes in global discourse analyses.

Imitation of foreign models and reformatting of Western themes created the problem of inferiority complex; while dependent on indigenous materials of myths, rituals, history, folklore and festivals placed African drama on the side of superiority complexes. However, both sides provide strong indicators that there was side by side utilization of adaptation and appropriation during the evolutionary process of modern African theatre. According to Julie Sanders; "Adaptation and Appropriation are, endlessly and wonderfully about seeing things come back to us in as many forms as possible" (160)

Therefore, adaptation stands out as one of the dominant and most influential dramatic techniques adopted by modern African dramatist for creation and recreation of literary works. Looking at the role of adaptation in the evolutionary process of modern African drama, one may be tempted to conclude that like the neoclassicists; achievements of modern African dramatists are achievements in adaptation. Adaptation is the transformation of a work of art into another form or medium or translocation of literary materials. The meaning of literary adaptation is influenced by the meaning of the root word adaptation in the biological sciences. It is among biological terms that enable survival of organisms during adverse conditions in their environments. The importation of this term into the humanities accounts for the survival of variety of literary materials in the arts especially theatre.

Linda Hutcheon posits that; "... adaptation is actually very difficult to define... because we use the same word for the process and the product." (15) Hutcheon invariably, divides the process of defining and understanding adaptation as a dramatic technique into two: as a process or product. Furthermore, she informs that: "As a product, an adaptation can be given a formal definition, but as a process- of creation and of reception- other aspects of *what is to be adapted, who is the adapter, why the adaptation, how to adapt, where the adaptation is taking place, and when the adaptation is taking place* have to be considered (15- 16). Furthermore, Hutcheon posits that, the process of literary adaptation involves; "... *a process of creation*, the act of adaptation always involves both (re-)interpretation and then recreation; this has been called both appropriation and salvaging, depending on your perspective." (8) Modern African dramatists including third generation Nigerian playwrights like Femi Osofisan, Emeka Nwabueze and Sonny Sampson-Akpan also portray in some of their plays that adaptation involves reformatting, reinterpretation, translocation, recreation and even some kind of appropriation.

Though adaptation is more embracive than appropriation, the two terms are not antipodal since adaptation process does not preclude appropriation. Literary appropriation in this context is the replication of what exists in another environment in another geographical location. Adaptation and appropriation are important creative techniques utilized by modern African Dramatists in their creative enterprises. This being the case, the litany of criticisms against adaptation and appropriation became topical in the African creative writing discourse; originality, fidelity, coherence, retention of meaning constitute arguments against most adapted African works.

The pertinent impression that most of the movements that characterized modernism do not have their strands in Africa fueled the skepticism that heralded the adoption of adaptation and appropriation of literary techniques by African dramatists. Therefore, adapting and appropriating the trappings of these foreign movements and models to Africa made some critics label such literary products as inferior. The quality of some of the adapted or appropriated works like Wole Soyinka's *Bacchae of Euripides*, Ola Rotimi's *The Gods are not to Blame*, Sonny Sampson-Akpan's *Found and Lost* speak for and a host of others reveal that they compete with Western and Oriental plays.

Barthes' postulation on adaptation debunks any inferiority appendage to adapted works, he posits that; "any text is an inter-text" (39). Barthes strongly asserts that, the works of previous and surrounding cultures were always present in contemporary literatures. Julie Sanders makes it much clearer below when she insists that; Literary texts are built from systems, codes and traditions established by previous works of literature. But they are also built from systems, codes, and traditions derived from companion art forms" (3).

These postulations are the primordial praxis that forms the basis of the significance and objective of this paper. Thus, the paper seeks to debunk all the biased and negative idiosyncrasies as well as inferiority complexes and skepticism surrounding adapted African plays, bearing in mind that adaptation and appropriation are both interpretative and creative techniques of writing that give dept, relocate and interrogate existing materials. Evidently, their usage and application is not peculiar to Africa, it cuts across epochs in global theatre history as reflected in some Western plays like Christopher Marlowe' s *Doctor Faustus*, and some Shakespearean plays.

Therefore the researchers insist that cultural structures are often replicable or obtainable in different geographical locations therefore, if a particular culture is quick to record in its structures other cultures or appropriating it in a locality with similar structures; it does not question originality, subjugate or make inferior such literary products.

It is therefore, a burden of this paper through case study and content analysis approaches of the qualitative research method to portray how Sampson-Akpan's creative adaptation technique can contribute to the revival of the declining absurd theatre in Africa; irrespective of the pessimisms or objectivism surrounding the adoption of adaptation or appropriation techniques by modern African dramatists.

Conceptualizing Adaptation and Appropriation

It is paramount to conceptualize adaptation and appropriation; so as to understand their relevance to Sampson-Akpan's creative technique. Adaptation is one of the oldest and most debated techniques of writing in the creative enterprise. The acceptance and rejection of adaptation from classicism to postmodernism may be attributed to its ubiquity across movements and theatre isms. Simply put, adaptation is broad and cuts across almost all facets of life and arts. Hence, Hutcheon posits that;

...what is involved in adapting can be a process of appropriation, of taking possession of another's story, and filtering it, in a sense, through one's own sensibility, interest, and talents. Therefore, adapters are first interpreters and then creators. (18)

Therefore, a focused conceptualization of these two terms reveals their relationship, convergent and divergent points. It also opens a window into their discourse and eventual utilization by African playwrights like Sampson-Akpan. Despite the ubiquity of adaptation, *Wikipedia* in its definition of adaptation narrows it down to drama, it says that;

Dramatic adaptation is the adapting of a literary source (e.g a novel, short story, and poem) to another genre or medium, such as a film, a stage play, or even a video game. It can also involve adapting the same literary work in the same genre or medium, just for different purposes (*Wikipedia* n.p).

Wikipedia's definition of adaptation above captures the idea of this paper that focuses on literary adaptation despite the fact that adaptation exists in almost all fields of study. Moreover it typifies adaptation and in its inclusiveness and states the type of adaptation the researchers are interested in (adapting the same literary work in the same genre or medium, just for different purposes) that being the case, the major concern in this paper, is dramatic adaptation as well as dramatic appropriation. This is without prejudice that there are other processes and forms of adaptation. For instance the transposition of literary works of art to another medium or genre is also another form of adaptation. According to Daniel Derkson;

Transposition from one medium to another is the ability to make fit or suitable by changing or adjusting, modifying something to create a change in structure, function, and form which produces a better adjustment (76).

Derkson not only defines adaptation from another dimension, but also highlights the underlining factors that give rise to literary/dramatic adaptations. He also touches on the convergence between adaptation and appropriation because the approaches of the two dramatic techniques involve both adjustments and modifications. However, in the arts, literary adaptations are of many types they include: myth, ritual, music, film, radio, history, legend, fable and folkloric adaptations. These forms of adaptation raise issues of authenticity, originality, fidelity and inferiority. For instance, when oral information is to be adapted to literature or any other medium, does that involve adaptation?

What is the level of reception of the derivation? Abiola Irele responds to the first question and says "in many ways, oral genre and dramatic performances have served as veritable resource pools for writers to borrow from and transform in their written works" (5). This is owing to the fact that oral performance and history genres predates written literature in the African milieu, so much so that oral tradition is a veritable tool or rather beneficial resource to modern African dramatists. Apart from oral literature, a cursory look at the thematic fixations of modern African plays provide indicators that; "...sources of fact from which adaptation may be made are non-fiction books, essays, 'oral histories' 'life-time stories' 'radio-documentary' newspaper accounts and transcripts from courts of law and parliament (Janis Balodis, 4).

The postulations of these scholars and their analyses have broadened the horizon of adaptation from just the re-formatting of an existing master piece to another medium; to a process that transform raw information to a solidified master piece. Little wonder Hutcheon describes adaptation as “a product and a process” (8). Hence, Adaptation in a nutshell becomes the act of transferring information from one medium or genre to another for diverse purposes to achieve different objectives; the adapter’s derivation is conditioned by purpose and objective of adaptation. Determining the purpose and objective of adaptation have no hard-and-fast rules however, general objectives of adaptation include achieving: change in structure, medium, function and purpose.

Differentiating between adaptation and appropriation is as dicey and complex as defining adaptation. Most scholars often liken adaption to appropriation; however, there is a thin dividing line between the two terms. Julie Sanders uses the word “appropriation” to distinguish the kind of adaptation which transposes original culture to a new culture. She observes in her postulation that; An adaptation signals a relationship with an informing source text. On the other hand, appropriations frequently affect a more decisive journey away from the informing source into a wholly new cultural product and domain (26).

Sanders shows the relationship between adaptation and appropriation in the quotation above, she as well suggests that appropriation shows more independence in the sense that it creates the picture of a new product different from the original. Hence, fidelity to the original as a problem of adaptation, does not apply to appropriation. Brian Mcfarlane succinctly describes this difference between adaptation and appropriation in a way of methodology thus;

When choosing a text for appropriation, ‘transfer’ and ‘adaptation’ proper are considered. The cardinal functions, character functions, and the psychological patterns of the source text, which comes under the consideration of transfer, are carefully transmuted. As appropriation transposes the cultural setting of the source text, the elements of transfer are appropriated suitably to the target culture (31). Simply put appropriation changes completely, while adaptation retains partially inadaptable element of theme, but changes completely peripheral elements of costumes, characterizations, plot of the source text, but shifts both language and settings into a new context.

This conceptualization affirms that the two terms could be combined according to Hutcheon's theory of adaptation in the creative process of a single dramatic genre. Hence, based on the theoretical premise of Hutcheon's theory of adaptation; attempt is made in the analyses of the case studies to prove that Sampson-Akpan achieved side by side utilization of the two techniques, appropriating as the case may be Camus' absurdism and adapting his play *Cross Purpose* to *Found and Lost*.

Bio-data of the Playwrights and Synopsis of *Cross Purpose* and *Found and Lost*

Albert Camus, though a European, was born to a French family in Algeria. He lived and grew up in Algeria after his father's death and eventually tested Algeria's post French war abject poverty that conditioned his literary ideology. Born 7th November, 1913, Camus and his brother were looked after by a grandmother that may be described as stern and strict. Camus started his primary school in 1918 in the Belcourt district and was lucky to be taught by Louis Germain who helped him secure a scholarship into secondary school in 1923. Camus dedicated his Nobel price award to his kind primary school teacher- Louis in 1958 which he won with *Discourse de Suede*. Camus did private reading to improve his level of education, and finally enrolled as a philosophy student at the University of Algiers.

As a student he did variety of jobs to support himself while he struggled with his early writing career. Jean Grenier one of Camus' University teachers to whom he dedicated his *L'Envers et l'endroit* was another major influence on Camus' career. His marriage in 1933 to an Algerian doctor's daughter ended tragically and perhaps set the stage for Camus' later absurd attitude to life. His romance with politics in the Algerian Communist Party was also brief before he was expelled from the party in 1937. His love for the theatre manifested during his student days; he wrote, directed and acted in many plays. Even though journalism was part of his career; he succeeded more as an absurdist writer. His preoccupation with absurdism is reflected in his absurdist theory *The Myth of Sisyphus* and his plays like: *Caligula*, *The Just*, *The Possessed* and *Cross Purpose* adapted by Sampson-Akpan. Camus died in a ghastly road accident with his friend and publisher Michael Gallimard at the age of forty-six in 1960.

Cross Purpose tells the tale of The Mother and her daughter (Martha) who live in a "shut-in Valley" located in a "dreary town." Mother and daughter turn their house into an inn all in the quest to make enough money and to say good-bye to this "Land of shadows." Their desperation turns them to evil in the sense that they developed the penchant for killing their guests and keeping their victim's money for themselves. The two run the inn business with an old Manservant, who in a manner of speaking is an accomplice to their crimes.

The Mother has a son (Jan) who is Martha's brother, but fate has it, that Jan left for a land far away for a very long time. Suddenly Jan feels he needs to return home because he has "duties" towards these two women. He does not plan to do this directly, thus he comes to them as a stranger; against his wife's idea who insists; "But why not let them know the truth at once?" However, Jan's decision to come as a stranger, "suits his Plan". The night he checks in to his room in the inn, Martha gives him a cup of tea that knocks him off. Though, The Mother has this intermittent resentment to kill Jan, but since he has taken the tea, the next line of action becomes inevitable. Hence, mother and daughter kill Jan and put his body in the bottom of the sea. Upon return to their inn (house) they discover through his passport that he is their long lost son and brother respectively. Out of utter disappointment, the Mother goes and lies with him in the bottom of the sea. Martha reveals the whole event to Jan's wife (Maria) upon her arrival to the inn to check on her husband who is supposed to have come back to her after his plan is accomplished. The duo is abandoned in their despair and Maria calls on God to "hear her and raise her from the dust".

Sonny Samson-Akpan lived fully as a playwright, actor and Lecturer. Even in the heat of his teaching chores, he still found time to combine with other artists to organize notable productions. He collaborated with Kofi Egbo in one of such efforts, during the production of Athol Fugard's *The Island*. His acting skills paid off handsomely in the demonstrations he gave to his students while directing most of his own plays. Among the plays he wrote and directed with student actors are: *Ima*, *Ekaete*, *Asabo Tail*, *Mfon*, *Found and Lost* as well as *Comments*. He taught at the Theatre Arts Department, University of Calabar and was among the pioneer staff of the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Uyo, Nigeria, before he left for Australia where he died after a brief illness.

Humorous, witty and sociable, Sonny had wisecracks for almost every situation. Friends, family and associates will always recall these artistries and remember that there was an artist who came and gave a good account of his God-given talents.

Like Camus, Sonny Sampson -Akpan also situates his own play *Found and Lost* in a post war society (Nigeria's post-war society). The play's protagonist is an illustrious young man, Esen who returns from the city to a rural village and seeks to spend the night in his household as a "stranger". They welcome him with open arms and excitement; but unfortunately, he flaunts his wealth before them and reveals the animal in man. This household in the quest for hospitality has given Esen the last of their food and drink and worse still they do not have money left on them for survival yet Esen has shown them unquantifiable wealth. He talks so much about the city and how he owes more wealth in the city even.

The Women of the house Eka (the Mother) and Nsa (the Daughter) conceive that the 'stranger' be killed and all his wealth taken from him. They place this responsibility on Ete the father of the house since it is a man's responsibility 'to kill.' Ete is reluctant over this arrangement and asks to go and drink before carrying out this act. As mother and daughter await Ete's return, Okon comes around with fresh fish and tells Eka that he has the intention of marrying Nsa. Excitedly, Eka calls on Nsa to come and hear 'an interesting thing', but like an absurdist character, as Okon makes to introduce his mission, he derails and changes the subject matter to a dispute over a palm tree estate that he inherited from his late father. This angers Nsa and she argues that the palm tree estate belongs to her family. A quarrel ensues and attracts the attention of Eka who attests that the palm tree estate actually belongs to her family. This disagreement ruins Okon's mission and he leaves the house amidst shouting and abuses.

Just afterwards, Akamba a palm wine-seller returns with Ete (drunk). He narrates the story of how Esen plans to make his return historic. He tells them that the woman standing beside him is Esen's wife and that the baby she carries is their child. He does not receive the excitement he anticipated because Eka and Nsa had already killed Esen because according to them, Ete 'will be too drunk to do it' when he returns. Realizing that the worst must have happened, Akamba shouts out 'what a gruesome game! What a fatal joke! What a wasted life!'

Adaptation or Appropriation: A Critical Re-reading of Albert Camus' Absurdism in *Cross Purpose* and Sampson-Akpan's *Found and Lost*

The word absurd is a modern theatre term used by Martin Esslin to describe literary works with the general opinion that the existential essence of man is absurd. The best approach to a discourse on absurdist playwrights and their plays is by defining their themes which is- absurdity rather than their styles. It is this subject matter and not their techniques that differentiates them and at the same time relates them to the pool of world drama:

The absurdist playwrights believe that our existence is absurd because we are born without asking to be born, we die without seeking death, we live between birth and death trapped within our body and our reason, unable to conceive of time in which we were not, or a time in which we will not be- for nothingness is very much like the concept of infinity: something we perceive only in so far as we cannot experience it (William .I. Oliver, 1-2).

According to M.H. Abrams and Geoffrey Harpham, Camus succinctly expresses these conditions in his *Myth of Sisyphus* saying: "In a universe that is suddenly deprived of illusions and of light, man feels a stranger. He is an irremediable exile This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, truly constitute the feeling of absurdity" (1). Part of Camus' absurdist philosophy is man's inability to reconcile himself with his environment. Eugene Ionesco lends credence to Camus' philosophy of absurdism when he describes the absurd man thus:

"Cut off from his religious, metaphysical, and transcendental roots, man is lost; all his actions become senseless, absurd, useless." (M.H. Abrams and Geoffrey Harpham, 1-2) Thus, in line with Camus' philosophy of absurdism, *Cross Purpose* emphasizes human experience of the absurd by stressing the failure of human beings to communicate adequately, the obstacles lying in the path of a direct and simple desire for happiness, and the sense of solitude or exile which affects the main characters. John Cruickshank in his introduction to Camus' four plays posits; "Much was written immediately after Camus' death about appropriateness of its arbitrary circumstances for a writer so closely identified with the idea of 'the absurd.'" Cruickshank explains further that:

In the early part of his life (when he wrote *Caligula*, *Le Malentendu* and *L'Etranger* for example) he was certainly very much preoccupied with this concept. By 'the absurd' he meant what is inexplicable in terms of human reason: those experiences that defy rational explanation or seem confound and controvert our sense of fair play, our desire for happiness, our need to find pattern and purpose in human existence" (14)

Hence, in *Cross Purpose* Jan seeks happiness through integration, solidarity and spontaneous recognition but the failure to explain, controverts the other characters' sense of fair play. Martha wants to escape to the sea and the sunlight and plans to use the money stolen from murdered guests for this purpose. Both reactions meet inevitable failure in a universe where inexplicable, arbitrary, cruel things happen alike to those who have chosen crime and those who have chosen innocence.

The appropriation of Camus' absurdism by Sampson-Akpan is obvious in his play *Found and Lost*. Absurdist themes of exile, immoral but failed desires and ephemeral happiness are transported into the African milieu without ossification of the original. The adaptation of the original characters as Esen, Eka and Nsa and the inclusion of Ete reveals the importance of a father in a family unit within Akpan's Ibibio cosmology. Akpan's creative alterations of peripheral elements of characterization and language, not only Africanizes Camus' absurdism, but also garnishes it with Afro idiosyncrasies that make adaptation re-formatting. Akpan differentiates the adapted son Esen, from the original son Jan. Unlike Jan, Esen does not just walk away like the Western Jan; but he was taken away by soldiers. Akpan shows that Africans cannot just abandon their kit and kin. However, Esen like Jan fails to communicate. This is a replication of Camus' absurdism as well as adherence to one of the principles of adaptation (fidelity to the original). The female characters, Maria, Martha and Eka and Nsa appear almost ossified in the derivation, but Akpan differentiates their circumstances as he makes Esen lure his hosts to commit the crime by displaying his wealth.

Ironically, too, what seems like morally regenerative actions can seal and confirm an individual's 'condemnation'. Thus, when Jan manages to appeal to the small human residue in Martha's almost inhumanly harsh nature he lures her closer to her evil desire and makes his own death inevitable.

Martha explains that when he evoked a response from her by speaking of the sun-drenched country of which she had always dreamt, he provided her with weapons against himself.

He unwittingly renewed her reasons for killing him and she says bitterly: 'That is how innocence is rewarded.' (John Cruickshank, 24) The absurdity of misunderstanding and incoherence of life are not merely implied in the subject matter of *Cross Purpose* and *Found and Lost* but are grossly explored by both the original and the derivation. However, Akpan uses adaptation process equation of less narrative codes plus performative codes to compress *Cross Purpose*, a three act play to one act play in *Found and Lost*. Akpan achieves this through his knowledge of functions proper; a theoretical provision of Roland Barth. However, to show the link between the two plays, incoherence, mistaken identities are directly referred to in the two texts on a number of occasions. For example, in the third act of the original, The Mother speaks of 'this earth where nothing is sure' and asserts that 'this world we live in doesn't make sense'. Similarly, Martha says to the wife of the brother she has murdered: neither of him nor for us, neither in life nor in death, is there any peace or homeland. For you'll agree one can hardly call it a home, that place of clotted darkness underground, to which we go from here, to feel blind animals. Finally, Martha advises Maria:

Martha: Pray your God to harden you to stone. It's the happiness he has assigned Himself, and the one true happiness. Do as He does, be deaf to all appeals, and turn your heart to stone while there still is time (161).

While in the derivation, Akamba shouts:

Akamba What a gruesome game! What a fatal joke! What a wasted life! (27).

The regrettable voices of the two plays seem to be saying that everything would have been different if the sons in the two plays have said: 'It's me, this is my name'. It comes down to saying that in an unjust and indifferent world, man can still achieve his own salvation and that of other people by the use of the simplest sincerity and the most precise language associated with some regions of the world.

Sonny Sampson Akpan's *Found and Lost*, an appropriation of Absurdism or Adaptation of *Cross Purpose*.

Analyses of the researchers so far, reveal that Sonny Sampson-Akpan's *Found and Lost* is both an appropriation and adaptation of Albert Camus' absurdism and his play *Cross Purpose* respectively. However, this does not lower the quality of his work or ascribes to it any atom of inferiority. Rather it reveals the creativity of Sampson-Akpan and lays bay his important contributions to the development of absurdism in African cosmology.

Found and Lost is an indigenous absurdist drama which does not lack originality as polemically ascertained by profound synopsis of the two plays in question, as well as the conceptualization of the two dramatic techniques: adaptation and appropriation; to show that Akpan's adaptation process equation debunks criticisms against adaptation and appropriation. This goes a long way to prove the originality of Akpan's work and substantiates its relevance to African dramaturgy. Adaptation and appropriation so to speak are fundamentally, processes that will bring forth new master pieces within the African region, considering the methodologies, processes, and purposes of the endeavor; their outcome should be purged of their critics' negativities. Hutcheon consolidates this assertion when she concludes that "...each genre, especially in the performance arts, has many limitations when adapted from another mode or form, but all forms have unique conventions that compensate for these limitations (49).

Conclusion

The fact that most of the modernistic "isms" are not adequately rooted in modern African dramaturgy, does not deny the fact that the strands and trappings of these movements can be appropriated, adapted or transposed to the African milieu. Akpan through his creative ingenuity has brought to lime-light by way of resuscitation, the trappings of absurdism as it exists in Africa. Therefore, the researchers recommend that African dramatists should not ignore the role of adaptation and appropriation in the evolutionary process of modern African drama. The two techniques still have a lot to offer to film makers, dramatists and musicians in Africa. The artists are free to utilize adaptation and appropriation either as processes or products because they have potentials to take African theatre to greater heights. "No story comes from nowhere, new stories are born of old" (Rushdie, 86).

Hence, the researchers conclude that adaptation and appropriation are universal and legitimate dramatic techniques that are adopted by modern Nigerian dramatists, because these techniques can serve the purpose of reawakening the present declining status of African absurdist dramaturgy, since adaptation also encourages working from rehearsal to script.

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